

ABSTRACT

In inspecting an inspection target surface by irradiating an irradiation light having a predetermined pattern on the inspection target surface, imaging the surface irradiated with the irradiation light and inspecting the inspection target surface based on an obtained image of the inspection target surface, the irradiation light irradiated from an irradiation face has a mesh-like pattern including meshes of a same shape, each mesh having an irradiation area smaller than a non-irradiation area in a plane normal to the optical axis. The inspection target surface is inspected, based on lightness/darkness information of an image area in the obtained image corresponding to a non-irradiated area in the inspection target surface. And, a light point having intermediate brightness and formed in a dark face formed within the mesh is extracted as a defect candidate.